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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: social integration

Statement submitted by the Worldwide Organization for Women, the World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, the Universal Peace Federation, the Women's Federation for World Peace, the Foundation for the Support of the United Nations, the International Federation for Home Economics and the International Federation of University Women, members of the Non-governmental Organization Committee on the Family in New York in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

As members of the Non-governmental Organization Committee on the Family in New York, we are committed to addressing issues and policies that impact the advancement of families within the context of the United Nations system

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement

1. As non-governmental organizations globally involved with families, we applaud the Commission for Social Development for setting, for the second year in a row, the theme for its session as "Promoting social integration", with special attention to issues of poverty eradication as well as full employment and decent work for all. In addition, we believe it is admirable that the Commission is promoting gender equality and fostering social integration for young people, persons with disabilities and older persons, as well as migrants and indigenous peoples.

2. Capacity-building, economic development and social integration require funding and technical support from Member States and donors. The solidarity within and among families in a community can facilitate social integration and result in the stability and continuity necessary for social and economic development.

3. We make the following recommendations.

4. The Commission for Social Development should support and strengthen human capital by allocating funding to organizations that promote social inclusion and integration. Special attention should be given to promoting the role of the family in the area of gender equality, including with regard to those members with special mental and physical needs. In addition, indigenous people, young people and the elderly, as well as migrant workers and their families, should be empowered with a view to addressing development issues. During periods of armed conflict and in the post-conflict phase, the reconstruction of damaged or destroyed social sectors, including health, education and social service institutions, is essential in order to support the long-term processes of social healing and social integration. Member States, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders should actively support, promote and protect the right to employment, food security, housing and health.

Participatory approaches

5. Families should play an instrumental role in decision-making with regard to the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes that affect them. The participation of families, as well as the social integration of all groups, can contribute to a sense of community and programme sustainability.

Economic development and education

6. It is imperative that Member States provide funding and technical support for the economic development and economic education of families and help them learn about the best practices followed in well-managed economic programmes. New technologies and such media as television and radio should be used to foster knowledge-sharing within and between families. In order to promote the sustainability of approaches aimed at economic development, it is necessary to provide access to markets for both men and women, as well as marginalized groups. Specifically, Governments should enhance their investment in research-based best practices, such as cash transfer programmes, the microcredit financing provided by the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and incentives in the form of education grants. Such programmes have measurably improved gender equality and

the economic self-sufficiency of families and can break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

Workplace environment

7. It is crucial that opportunities for employment and training be provided for both men and women as well as for members of socially marginalized groups, including individuals with disabilities. Member States should allocate funds and enforce regulations with a view to promoting safe working environments in which workers are guaranteed healthful working conditions, equity and justice.